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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/685,912

10/15/2003

William Fiehler

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11/23/2009

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EXAMINER

RYCKMAN, MELISSA K

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3773

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DELIVERY MODE

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/685,912	Applicant(s) FIEHLER ET AL.	
	Examiner MELISSA RYCKMAN	Art Unit 3773	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 July 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This office action is in response to amendments filed 7/28/09.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 43 and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akerfeldt et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,860,895).

Regarding Claim 1, Akerfeldt teaches a tissue puncture system comprising:

- A tissue puncture closure device for partial insertion into and sealing of an internal tissue wall puncture (Fig. 8), the device comprising:
 - a filament (6) extending from a first end of the closure device to a second end of the closure device
 - an anchor (2) for insertion through the tissue wall puncture, the anchor being attached to the filament at the second end of the closure device (Fig. 5)
 - a sealing plug (3) slidably attached to the filament and positioned adjacent to the anchor (fig. 2)
 - a handle (36) located at the first end of the closure device

- and an automatic driving mechanism (44) located within the handle that tamps the sealing plug (3) utilizing force generating by withdrawal of the closure device from the internal tissue wall puncture (Fig. 5) to move the tamping tube toward the sealing plug (Fig. 5).
- The automatic driving mechanism (44) comprises a transducer (40) for effecting movement of the tamping tube toward the sealing plug upon withdrawal of the closure device from the tissue wall puncture (Fig. 5)
- Transducing a motive force generated by retraction (33 surrounded by 22) of a proximal end of the filament from the tissue closure device to a linear tamping force upon the sealing plug

Akerfeldt teaches a transducer (32), but does not teach an electronic switch.

However it is well known in the art to use an electronic switch as using electric power is a well-known substitution for manual power (this makes the using the device easier for the user). Moreover, it has been held that providing an automatic means to replace manual activity which has accomplished the same result involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Venner*, 120 USPQ 192.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory

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obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1 and 3-44 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of copending Application Nos. 11/130895 and 11/103257. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they relate to the same inventive concept, that being a tissue puncture closure device comprising a filament, an anchor, a sealing plug and an automatic driving mechanism for automatic tamping, including a transducer, a spool, a gear, a torque limiting clutch etc.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 1 and 3-44 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-28 of U.S. Patent No. 7,618,436. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they relate to the same inventive concept, that being a tissue

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puncture closure device comprising a filament, an anchor, a sealing plug and an automatic driving mechanism for automatic tamping, including a transducer, a spool, a gear, a torque limiting clutch etc.

Claims 1 and 3-44 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-27 of U.S. Patent No. 7,618,438. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they relate to the same inventive concept, that being a tissue puncture closure device comprising a filament, an anchor, a sealing plug and an automatic driving mechanism for automatic tamping, including a transducer, a spool, a gear, a torque limiting clutch etc.

Claims 1 and 3-44 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-35 of U.S. Patent No. 7,250,057. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they relate to the same inventive concept, that being a tissue puncture closure device comprising a filament, an anchor, a sealing plug and an automatic driving mechanism for automatic tamping, including a transducer, a spool, a gear, a torque limiting clutch etc.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments submitted 7/28/09 with respect to claims 1 and 3-42 are persuasive. Applicant's arguments submitted 7/28/09 regarding claims 43 and 44 are the following:

- Akerfeldt fails to teach an electronic switch as described in the claim.

The examiner disagrees and maintains the rejection as set forth above.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MELISSA RYCKMAN whose telephone number is

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(571)272-9969. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jackie Ho can be reached on (571)-272-4696. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MKR
/Melissa Ryckman/
Examiner, Art Unit 3773

/Julian W. Woo/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3773